



Project title: SchoolinHub: An innovative and holistic programme in ECEC to support language learning and integration of migrant children-parents based on CLIL, Social Stories and Gamification approaches.

SCHOOLinHUB - Integration as a Two Way Process Through Schools Communities and Local Authorities

By the Greek Forum of Refugees GFR | SCHOOLinHUB Project AMIF 101141033

Integration is often described as something newcomers must do on their own: learn the language, find work, understand institutions and adapt quickly. This misses the central point. Integration is a relationship requiring openness and responsibility from refugee and migrant communities, host societies, institutions and decision-makers. It becomes sustainable when rooted in daily life: in neighbourhoods, schools, municipal services and community spaces. SCHOOLinHUB follows this approach, helping schools and communities become hubs of inclusion for migrant children aged 4 to 7 and their families.

Integration begins from day one

Newly arrived families in Greece face immediate questions about protection, housing, healthcare and school enrolment. Confusing procedures, delays and inaccessible information damage trust from the beginning. Protection and integration therefore cannot be separated. Families need clear guidance, interpretation and early access to rights and services. Practical welcome packs in understandable language help parents engage with schools, local services and the wider community.

Schools as hubs for families

Schools are among the first places where families and local society meet regularly. Parents want to support their children, but language barriers and unfamiliar procedures can leave them outside school life. SCHOOLinHUB links children, parents, teachers and community actors through a whole-school approach. Its resources include teacher development, welcome and action planning tools, Social Stories, MyBuddy mentoring, language and civic learning for parents, and community activities beyond the classroom. When parents can speak with teachers, understand school messages and participate confidently, children feel safer and the school becomes a place of belonging for the whole family.



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Local authorities turn policy into practice

National strategies and political commitment matter, but integration happens locally. Municipalities can connect schools with health and social services, libraries, cultural centres, sports organisations, NGOs and refugee and migrant communities. They can provide spaces, interpretation, practical information and coordination. They also need sufficient staff and long-term support; otherwise successful initiatives risk ending when project funding finishes. Strong local coordination benefits everyone by improving access, reducing isolation and preventing tensions created by neglect and misinformation.

Communities must help shape the solutions

A two-way approach means recognising refugees and migrants as parents, neighbours, workers, volunteers and citizens with knowledge and agency. Refugee and migrant-led organisations should be involved from the design stage, not invited only when institutions need outreach or participants. Lived experience identifies barriers that formal systems may overlook and makes services more accessible. Trust grows through consistent communication, safe spaces, clear responsibilities and respect. Parents and communities need regular opportunities to influence decisions that affect them.

A closing message from GFR

At the Greek Forum of Refugees, we know integration from lived experience and years of community work. Families move forward when they feel informed, respected and included. SCHOOLinHUB offers a practical model that is two-way, local and cooperative. It starts with children but reaches parents, schools and the wider community. Integration succeeds when local authorities, schools, communities and civil society work as partners rather than as parallel worlds.



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